

Two contributions by William Brant, Toronto Local, East Branch

(Pseudonym for Zane Boyd, from LSA/LSO DB No. 55, April 1973)

(1) AGAINST THE SCHOOL OF QUOTATIONS

The central thesis of the United Tendency — that the current rise of nationalism in Canada is essentially progressive in character — rests on the basic material premise that there is now occurring an economic integration of the Canadian economy with that of the United States, a process which is shaping the configuration of class relations and the class struggle in this country. This, we have stated from the outset, must be the starting point of any Marxist approach to the question. As early as the beginning of December, in his contribution, *The Key Issue at Dispute in Canada-US Relations, part I*, comrade Dowson posed the question thus: "...the phenomenon of an advanced capitalist imperialist nation being integrated, in a cold way, with another advanced capitalist and imperialist power is something new and unforeseen, except possibly in an abstract and speculative way, by the Marxist movement." This contention — the economic integration of Canada with the United States — which is the axis of the United Tendency's position, and which Comrade Dowson has proceeded to document in a number of contributions — this contention has yet to be challenged and refuted in documented form in any detail by the authors of *Canada and, the Crisis of World Imperialism* or any of its supporters. This central question has been avoided; instead, we have been presented with a whole series of quotations from Marxist thinking as it applied to particular situations forty or fifty years ago and under a variety of different circumstances (cf. [refer to] Ian Angus' *Marxism and. Nationalism*)

However, it is precisely because the process now underway in Canada is "something new and unforeseen" by Marxists that new problems are posed for Marxist theory and analysis. As we have insisted all along, traditional views and categories of Marxist thinking on nationalism and imperialism cannot be assumed to precisely apply to or in and of themselves resolve the question posed. Above all, we must examine the question in its specific context — the particular nature of Canada's relationship with the United States. (Emphasis by the website editor)

In his *Contribution on Nationalism, part I*, Comrade Lomas briefly sketched in the evolution of Marxist thinking on the question of nationalism. Some comrades have objected that Comrade Lomas discredits Marxism on the question, suggesting that Marxism really knows nothing about nationalism. Quite the contrary: Lomas' purpose was to show that, for Marxists, the question of nationalism has never been a simple, cut-and-dry one, bound by rigid, schemas and categories; that Marxist thinking on the question has gone through an evolution as capitalism has continued to exist and unfold; that, above all, Marxist thinking has been **concrete** in its approach in each specific historical instance.

It is correct that comrades should search out our ideological heritage. Our search has suggested to us, however, that the question is not the inadequacy of Marxism, but the newness of the problem before us. In other words, the debate does not counterpose Marxist orthodoxy to revisionism, but rather challenges all Marxists to come to grips with a new problem, armed with what we find in the Marxist arsenal.

In this contribution, I wish to focus in on one particularly valuable tool in that arsenal — the law of uneven and combined development in history. An appreciation and understanding of this law and its operation is of considerable importance in this debate — in fact, it is essential if we are to grasp what is taking place in Canada today. I intend to briefly elaborate on this law and show how it applies to Canada and the question at hand. I have used George Novack's essay, *Uneven and*

Combined Development in History, as a basic reference. I urge all comrades to read or re-read Novack's essay; it is like a breath of fresh air for anyone caught up (or bogged down) in the present discussion.

Basically, the law of uneven and combined development can be outlined as follows:

A. Uneven Development in History

- 1) History does not unfold in a regular, uniform manner. In reality, it unfolds unevenly and is constantly in flux. For instance, the Marxist outline of the successive stages of social development — primitive communism, savagery, barbarism, civilization; and slavery, feudalism, capitalism, socialism — as valuable as it may be under some circumstances, is highly abstract and overgeneralized. This schema can serve only to guide our investigation. It cannot be substituted for an examination of any concrete segment of society.
- 2) Each section of humanity has passed through the different stages of historical and social evolution at different times in different parts of the world, and in different ways. For example, the Stone Age ended before 3500 B.C. in Mesopotamia, about 1600 B.C. in Denmark, 1492 in America — and not until 1800 in New Zealand. Furthermore, this uneven development of society results in a coming together of different stages of social evolution at various times. For instance, while capitalism was rapidly developing in Western Europe, Russia and Eastern Europe still languished under feudal relations. At the same time, slavery was experiencing a peculiar new lease on life in America, while further west, Native cultures still clung to a primitive mode of life. Today, capitalism is highly advanced in Western Europe, while post-capitalist relations of production exist in Soviet Russia, East Europe, China and Cuba. At the same time, much of the colonial world suffers the vestiges of feudalism while in Africa, primitive tribal cultures exist side-by-side with the most modern methods of capitalist production.

So universal and significant is unevenness in history that Trotsky termed it "the most general law of the historical process."

- 3) Unevenness is not only manifested, however, between the various stages of social evolution; it is active in the evolution of each particular social formation. And with the coming of capitalism, the highest stage of social evolution thus far, unevenness expresses itself more sharply and more universally than ever before.

Why and how is this so?

Capitalism is the first social formation to establish a world economic system. In its evolution over the past five centuries, from commercial capitalism to industrial capitalism and finally to monopoly capitalism and imperialism, it has drawn all five continents within its grasp and influence. Every country, however backward, has become subject to its laws of operation.

However, each country has not participated equally in this process, evolved along identical paths, or gone through similar stages of development. On the contrary, each country has participated in the universal process in its own peculiar way, following its own distinct line of development, according to the peculiar natural (geographic) and historical circumstances that have conditioned its development. Thus, nations have not evolved evenly, at the same rate, or to the same extent, but in an uneven and often highly contradictory way. As Novack puts it, "their national development in many respects did not proceed along parallel lines but at angles to each other, and sometimes even at right angles."

Trotsky concluded that national peculiarity is the most general product of the unevenness of historical development, its final result.

One example should suffice. In Quebec, following the conquest of 1759, British capitalism did not dismantle the backward feudal relations in the colony; on the contrary, it continued to prop up those very relations and the classes whose interests they served, in order to find a base of support within the conquered colony. (This it did, in spite of the fact that at home it had been dead-opposed to those same feudal relations and had, in fact arisen on the basis of their destruction.) Thus, capitalist Britain in actuality fostered the uneven development of society in Canada, between Quebec, where feudal relations stood in the way of capitalist development, and Ontario, where there were no such barriers and the development was much more rapid. It is this uneven development which is in part at the bottom of the rise of militant Québécois nationalism in recent years.

B) Combined Development In History

4) Due to the unevenness of historical development between different stages of social evolution and among nations under capitalism, combinations or a coming together of different and often highly contradictory stages of social development result. This can produce strange blends of contradictory factors existing between nations or within the same nation itself. It is precisely such combinations of conflicting factors that are responsible for the very tensions existing between and within different countries which determines and conditions their further evolution and development. Contradiction and the interacting of contradictory factors in society are essential elements in the unfolding of the historic process. Marxists see such contradiction as being rooted in the different levels in the development of the productive forces which various segments of society (and nations under capitalism) have achieved.

It was the combination of highly advanced monopoly capital and the backward feudal conditions of tsarist Russia that created the explosive force behind the Russian Revolution in 1917. In 19th century America, it was the incompatibility of rapidly developing industrial capitalism in the north with outmoded slave production in the south that set the country ablaze in civil war in the 1860's. In Quebec today, it is the national oppression of the Québécois which gives added dimension to the **class** question, the class struggle.

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The law of uneven and combined development, outlined above, offers us the basic concepts with which to come to grips with the question under debate. Above all, it illustrates why, as Marxists, we must be concrete in our analysis of every phenomenon in each specific historical instance. The general laws of capitalist development apply to all countries, above all advanced capitalist countries like Canada; no country, least of all Canada, can escape their influence. However, our task is to understand precisely how these laws operate in each specific instance (e.g., in Canada today), given the uneven development among nations and of capitalism in general.

It is the common opinion of the United Tendency that the process which we see unfolding in North America — economic integration — a process which we have documented in the course of the discussion — is a striking confirmation of the law of uneven and combined development. In its declaration, the United Tendency suggests that one cannot grasp the essence of Canadian nationalism today without recognizing the process of integration of the Canadian economy with that of the United States — now taking place. This integration is the outcome of a dual process: the

uneven development of capitalism as a whole in transition to socialism; and the uneven development of capitalism in North America, specifically between Canadian capitalism and American capitalism.

C) The Uneven Development of the Socialist Revolution

The tendency toward economic integration of the North American continent is historically an inevitable process. Under capitalism, this process has traditionally been thwarted by the artificial boundary along the 49th parallel and the existence of two separate nation states, Canada and the U.S. It has traditionally been the view of Marxists -- that the historically inevitable economic integration of North America would be fulfilled through the socialist revolution and the construction of the United Socialist States of North America. Due to the uneven development of the socialist revolution on a world scale, however, there has resulted an historic delay of the revolution in Canada and the US. So strong is the trend toward economic integration of the two economies, however, that this process has proceeded to take place under capitalism, in a cold way, creating a situation which to our knowledge is unique to history.

By itself, however, the delay of the Northamerican socialist revolution is not sufficient to explain the economic integration of Canada and the US under capitalism today. We must also take into account:

D) The uneven development of capitalism in North America, specifically between Canadian capitalism and American capitalism.

The development of the Canadian economy and society has historically been weak and distorted, the product of uneven development between Britain, the United States and Canada itself, caught as it was in the middle. For an entire historical period, Canada's development was held back by Britain. While the United States underwent its revolution back in 1776, opening the way for the rapid development of American capitalism over the next century, Britain continued to confine Canada to a colonial status — supplier of furs and timber — for yet a number of decades. Canadian capitalism throughout this period developed slowly and on a narrow basis. 19th century Canadian society and politics was dominated by a subservient, parasitic merchant class, dependent on its ties with British capitalism. Confederation — the formation of the Canadian nation-state was mainly the design of this merchant capitalist class together with British capital interests in an effort to establish an independent economy in North America capable of supplying staples to Europe while resisting the annexationist pressures of American capitalism. One merely has to recall the illustrious words of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first Prime Minister, to illustrate the true character of Canada's nascent bourgeoisie: "A British subject I was born, a British subject I will die." Can anyone imagine George Washington or Thomas Jefferson uttering anything so ludicrous on the morrow of the Declaration of Independence?

Even after Canada began to develop industrially with the turn of the century, it was unable to free itself from foreign influence, particularly the weight of US capital and the pull of the American market. Canada's tariff policy, while it restricted US imports, actually had the effect of encouraging American investment. Branch plants and industries were developed in Canada to supply raw and partially finished material to US parent plants, and to take advantage of the British preferential tariff system. In 1918, US capitalism began to negotiate a series of mutually satisfactory preferential arrangements with the Canadian bourgeoisie and steadily increased its investments thereafter. By the early sixties, the penetration of US capital had reached tremendous proportions and has continued to rise steadily ever since. Throughout the course of this century, continentalism has increasingly posed itself as the only option open to Canada's ruling class.

The historic weakness of Canadian capital and the Canadian bourgeoisie has also conditioned the development of nationalism in Canada. From the very outset, nationalism in Canada (has) been weak and stunted, in the image of its bourgeoisie. Unlike the US, Britain, France, Germany, or any of the world's major capitalist powers, Canada has never really known a fervent, deeply rooted bourgeois nationalism of its own. If anything, "Canadian nationalism" in the past was largely an expression of loyalty to another power, notably the pro-British nationalism of Canada's early bourgeoisie, and more recently that of petit-bourgeois has-beens opposed to continentalist concepts. Such nationalism, however, has historically found little support among the proletarian and plebian classes.

(One might point out how the bourgeoisie has fostered anti-Québécois chauvinism in Canada. This expression of nationalism — reactionary to the core — while significant, has not been sufficient basis on which to sustain a fervent patriotism for the Canadian state among the masses of the population. What's more, this kind of chauvinism among the Canadian people has actually been somewhat hindered by the fact that Canada's bourgeoisie itself has been made up in part of Québécois. While these Québécois bourgeois have necessarily played second fiddle to the Anglo-Canadian variety, they have nonetheless shared in the ruling of Canada, both its economy and its state.)

The development of nationalism in Canada has traditionally been weak and narrow, because the power and influence of the Canadian bourgeoisie has likewise been weak and narrow. The development of a nationalism among growing numbers of the Canadian population is a wholly new phenomenon. This we have stressed from the very beginning of the discussion. It arises in response to the integration of Canada's economy with American capitalism, an outcome of the uneven evolution of capitalism in North America and on a world scale. As Marxists, we are neither for nor against this economic integration; we recognize it as inevitable, as "necessary". But we also recognize that under capitalism, it takes place in an unplanned, indiscriminate, anarchistic manner. And it is precisely **this** that is creating a militant, radical nationalism among more and more people in this country. Growing numbers of Canadians feel a lack of control over what is happening. They no longer wish to see their fate tied to that of American capitalism, which they are coming to recognize as a brutal, violent, huckster, imperialist power. This growing nationalism in Canada is a reaction to capitalism as it has developed in North America. Finding no support among the Canadian bourgeoisie (indeed, it is just this bourgeoisie which is increasingly seen as responsible for and partner to integration with US capitalism), these growing national aspirations lead to conflict with the Canadian state. As a reaction against capitalism in Canada as it exists today, these national aspirations tend to raise the class question in this country and lead to a linking with the tasks of the Canadian and world socialist revolution.

AFTERWORD I:

Each country participates in the unfolding of the universal process in its own peculiar way. This lesson is crucial for revolutionaries.

Lenin and Trotsky led a successful revolution in Russia not simply because they understood the materialist conception of history and the general laws of capitalist development. (There were not a few Russian revolutionaries, and great ones at that, who had such an understanding.) Lenin and Trotsky were distinguished above all because they had mastered the peculiarities of Russian society; because they were intimately in touch with the mood and thinking of the Russian masses; because they had grasped how the general laws of capitalist development found their concrete expression in their own particular context. In this sense, they were not merely proletarian internationalists, but Russians to the core. Such great importance did he place upon the peculiarities of his own country's development, that Trotsky started off his monumental history of

the Russian Revolution with a chapter entitled just that — "The Peculiarities of Russia's Development". This chapter is a model in the concrete application of Marxist thinking to the specific context.

It can be said, in all seriousness that until Canadian revolutionaries have likewise analyzed and fully grasped the peculiarities of Canada's social and economic development, we won't get past first base in making a revolution in this country. We must become Canadian revolutionaries as well as internationalists — masters of our own situation and the consciousness of the Canadian masses. This is one of the biggest problems facing the left in this country — its miserable understanding of Canada, its history and present-day reality. And, that includes our own movement above all. (*Emphasis by the website editor*)

AFTERWORD, II:

According to the theory of the Political Committee majority, nationalism can only be progressive if it is the nationalism of an oppressed nation, and a nation can only be oppressed if it has unsolved bourgeois-national tasks to complete.

If we look carefully at Eastern Europe, we will see where this kind of formalistic reasoning on the question of nationalism gets us.

In the Eastern European workers' states, there has existed a nationalism which our movement has recognized as essentially progressive within the specific context. We have identified with this nationalism, even though these countries are in a post-capitalist stage of development. We have identified with it, even though many of these countries actually had their own bourgeois-democratic revolution at one time (e.g. Hungary) and all have previously passed through a bourgeois phase. In all of these countries, the various national tasks were long ago solved (national unity, independent national state and economy, language rights, etc., etc.) How can this nationalism be progressive? According to the schema of the PC majority, it couldn't conceivably be.

A truly Marxist approach to the problem would go something like this: "The fact that these countries have solved their formal national tasks and have achieved their formal independence obviously hasn't solved the problem. We must take a closer look at why there is national indignation among these peoples, why there is a nationalist **sentiment**, in spite of formal independence. We must take a closer look at the actual role the economies of these countries play in relation to the Soviet Union (at which this national indignation seems to be directed). We must look at what role the formally Independent governments (states) actually play vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. We must examine the **facts** of the matter, the concrete situation, rather than resting on dogmatic abstractions. We must also recognize that there are even reactionary (even fascist!) expressions of nationalism in these countries. Our task, however, is to assess the overall thrust of this nationalism, its general character."

By adopting such an approach to the question (which by the way has more or less been our approach), we would come to see that this nationalism is not based on abstract bourgeois-national tasks that have yet to be performed, but has a different origin. We would see that **this** nationalism is the outcome of an historically new and different and unforeseen situation — the bureaucratic domination of these nations by the Kremlin and the national bureaucracies of these countries. We would come to understand that these national aspirations do not in their thrust lead to support for any national capitalism (or even the national bureaucracies), as might be expected; but on the contrary, they **lead toward** pro-socialist conclusions; and they cannot be fulfilled except by linking up with the tasks of the anti-bureaucratic political revolution.

Perhaps if comrades can accept this approach to a contradictory phenomenon in Eastern Europe — that nationalism can actually have a progressive thrust without any bourgeois-national tasks to be solved — they might be able to approach concrete reality in Canada. While there are obvious differences in each situation, there is a definite lesson to be drawn as to methodology in approaching the question of nationalism in each given instance.

Comrades, the truth is concrete.

AFTERWORD III:

It has been said that the United Tendency, notably in its declaration statement, attempts to apply the theory of permanent revolution to Canada, an advanced capitalist country; that it thus is making a travesty of that theory, is bastardizing Marxism and Trotskyism, etc. The accusation, however, is misdirected, and itself reflects a lack of theoretical understanding.

The theory of permanent revolution actually does apply to Canada — but just as it applies to every country in the world, including advanced capitalist countries. Every country, including Canada, is an integral part of the world system, cannot escape the contradictions of that system, and can only resolve its own historical contradictions within the framework of the international class struggle and socialist revolution. The socialist revolution will begin on national foundations — but it cannot be completed within these foundations.

Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is not conceived in terms of the colonial and semi-colonial countries alone. It constitutes a global view of the revolutionary process based on an understanding of the epoch in which we live. Our analysis of and strategy for the colonial and semi-colonial sector is but a part of this theory — certainly the most celebrated part, but nonetheless a part.

It is in the narrow colonial sense of the theory that I suspect the charge against the United Tendency is made — that we are trying to impart the peculiar dynamic of the colonial revolution onto Canada. This, however, is simply not the case. We have categorically denied, all along, that Canada is either a colony or a semi-colony. There is no agrarian question in Canada in the colonial sense. There are not even any bourgeois-national tasks to complete in Canada. In no way is there anything like the situation facing revolutionaries in the colonial world.

What the United Tendency **has** done is to examine the uneven development of Canada within the world capitalist framework in order to help understand, a new phenomenon. The law of uneven and combined development happens to be a key aspect of the theory of permanent revolution, especially as that theory applies to the colonial revolution. We have applied the law of uneven and combined development to Canada not in any belief that Canada is a colony in any way — certainly not in any belief that the permanent revolution in the colonial sector is applicable to advanced capitalist Canada. The law of uneven and combined development is active in all sectors of the world, however, and in every country. It is crucial to understanding our own reality as well as that in the colonial sector. What has applying this law to Canada to do with the theory of permanent revolution in colonial countries?

— March 31, 1973

(2) WHAT THE DISPUTE OVER CANADIAN NATIONALISM IS ABOUT

The following is major part of a United Tendency presentation to the Metro Toronto Local Assembly on the Political Resolution, April 8, 1973 (*by William Brant, Toronto East Branch --ed.*) The United Tendency is presenting two amendments to that resolution. The first, which deals with Canada-US relations and Canadian nationalism, is motivated in this contribution. The second, which deals with our NDP work over the past year, will be outlined and motivated in full at the convention.

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A political resolution must base itself on a correct factual analysis of Canadian capitalism in its relation to the world economy and above all in relation to the economy of the United States. It must determine the overall direction of the Canadian economy, how this is affecting the role of the Canadian state, and finally the effects all this is having on the course of the class struggle in this country.

As it now stands, the political resolution of the Political Committee does not start from such an objective analysis of the Canadian reality. And that is its main flaw and weakness. It deals with the situation facing Canadian capitalism in the most superficial way, devoting two and a half pages in part B to a few sketchy comments and facts on the overall weakness of Canadian capitalism, the effects this has on the labor movement, efforts by the bourgeoisie at rationalization, and the weight of the state in the economy.

The relations between the Canadian economy and American capital — which only happens to own and control its key sectors -- are virtually ignored. And the little it does say — in one miserable paragraph — about Canada-US relations is totally wrong: it says that the special relationship between US and Canadian capitalism is being altered due to increasing pressure on the Canadian bourgeoisie to improve its competitive capacity, presumably with the United States. None of this is at all substantiated. And as comrade Dowson has shown in bulletins 25, 30 and 35, * the reality is completely otherwise. (* *The Key Issue in the debate on Canada-U.S. relations, Part I, Canada's chartered banks and their role in Canada-U.S. relations and Declaration of the United Tendency --ed.*)

We have been told by the Majority Tendency comrades that the dispute here is not a matter of voting for different sets of statistics. The facts and data, they say, are irrelevant to the question. Well, comrades, the dispute **is about** which set of statistics is accurate. When all the key sectors of the Canadian economy — some 60% of the manufacturing industry, the dynamic growth sectors, as well as the control of the banks — are in the hands of US capital, this has a profound influence on the role and radius of power of the Canadian state. And it affects the course of the class struggle in this country.

Now that doesn't make us some sort of vulgar economic determinists, as Comrade Angus makes us out to be. Let us start with a little basic Marxism. Marxism bases itself on an understanding of the economic reality. For us, the economic situation is key. That doesn't mean to say that economics is the **only** element involved; that would make any assessment of reality meaningless and abstract. Various factors -- political, legal, cultural -- enter the picture. But among these, the economic factors, are **decisive**. That is why Marxism **starts** with an analysis of the underlying economic reality, and that reality is based on the **facts**. That's ABC, comrades.

That is why the key issue at dispute is precisely the economic reality in Canada — the direction of the Canadian economy and the effect this is having on the nature and role of the Canadian state. Who owns Canada? Who rules it? That's the key issue here. The United Tendency has answered these questions. And we've answered them with facts. Our analysis — our statistics — has shown us that the Canadian reality is not what the Majority Tendency would have us believe; namely, that the Canadian capitalist class is a powerful independent capitalist class in domination of the key sectors of the Canadian economy, in full control of its financial institutions, firmly established in its "fortress state" and one of the major colonial imperialist powers in the world. Our analysis has shown that the reality is otherwise — that the Canadian economy is under increasing control and domination by US capital and that this is determining the whole course of the Canadian economy. (Emphasis by the website editor)

Our analysis has shown that an **integration** of the Canadian and American economies has taken place. Now, we want to say a word about this integration. Because Comrade Riddell has managed to confuse the question. In his plenum report, he agrees that integration of capital is taking place between the United States and Canada; but he contends that this is happening, after all, among **all** the capitalist powers as seen in the interpenetration of foreign investment, the rise of "multi-national" corporations, and by the very rapid increase of inter-imperialist trade over the past two decades. But comrades — interpenetration, yes; inter-imperialist trade, yes. But that is not **integration** which is what we are talking about. Interpenetration of capital and inter-imperialist trade has meant **increasing rivalry** among the capitalist powers, between the US, Japan, West Germany, etc. With Canada and the US, on the other hand, the United Tendency has shown the opposite has been the case — not interpenetration, not increasing rivalry, but **integration** of the two economies and an arrival at a general harmony of interests between the decisive sectors of the Canadian capitalist class and the US capitalist class. For comrades who are so concerned about terminological accuracy and clarity, they had better get this point straight. Integration is something quite different from interpenetration, something which has different effects, and something which causes us to draw different conclusions.

Domination by US capital and the integration of the Canadian and American economies means that the major decisions about the development and direction of Canada's economy are being made by US capital and its state. This is having a profound influence on the superstructure in this country — on the role and radius of action of the state. The Canadian state has come under increasing guidance and control of another power, both economically and politically speaking.

As far as the economy is concerned, our analysis has shown that the state does not service the needs of an independent Canadian capital with an independent market and so forth, so much as it serves the needs of an **integrated** capital, and capital that is mainly American owned or controlled. It is ludicrous, therefore, for *Labor Challenge* to make out that the Canadian bourgeoisie and state has a big stake in blocking the Mackenzie pipeline development, especially when the Canadian government has been involved up to its neck in the project. It becomes even more ridiculous when the head of Imperial Oil of Canada, US-owned, and the head of the Toronto-Dominion Bank, the most US-dominated bank in the country, are cited as examples of top Canadian business interests that supposedly want to block the project. Two tiny incidents of resistance by the Canadian state to US capitalist takeover of Home Oil and the Dennison uranium interests are pointed out as some kind of proof-positive that the Canadian state will do other than get the best price possible in the Mackenzie deal with US capital interests.

Integration has had its political effects as well. In world politics, the role of Canada is not that of an independent imperialist power, but that of a satellite power of the United States. This has been most clearly shown by Canada's role in Vietnam. Canada has no role in Vietnam as an

independent imperialist power, as *Labor Challenge* is now making out to be the case. What independent economic interests does it have there? What independent military commitments? It has been evident all along that Canada's role has been that of an agent and accomplice of Washington. It is just this fact that has made our slogan "End Canada's Complicity" so relevant and popular in the antiwar movement in this country.

It is all this, comrades -- the economic integration of Canada and the US, and the effects it is having on the role and power of the Canadian state -- that must constitute the underlying economic and social framework for any analysis of what is happening in this country. It is **this** reality that is shaping the relations among the class forces in Canada. It is **this** reality that is shaping the consciousness of those forces. It is **this** reality that is determining the course of the radicalization in Canada. It is **this** reality that has given rise over the past five or six years to a new expression of nationalism among growing numbers of the Canadian population -- and **not** some mythical increasing rivalry, between Canada as a strong and independent economy and state and the other capitalist powers, especially the US. There is no factual, scientific basis for such an idea.

If you stop and consider what I've been saying, you will see that the United Tendency has not in any way reached its position on the basis of moods or sentiments or idealistic conceptions, as comrade Angus would have us believe. From the very beginning, our assessment of what is happening in the radicalization today, in the consciousness of the masses, has clearly been based on a factual, scientific analysis of the underlying economic and social reality. It is not **we** who have approached this question in a subjective manner, but on the contrary, the Majority Tendency.

The Majority Tendency are so bold to begin by saying that the facts, our analysis, is irrelevant to the question at dispute. Marxists should be so bold as to ignore the facts, to ignore reality, to say that it has nothing to do with this growing expression of nationalism. Well, comrades of the Majority Tendency, wherein **DO** the origins of this nationalist consciousness lie? As Marxists, as materialists surely we must consider that it lies somewhere in objective reality. Or is it just a lot of bourgeois ideology, a bourgeois brainwave perhaps which permeates the radicalization?

The Majority Tendency comrades are not so crude, however. As Marxists they understand their ABC's -- that consciousness is a product of objective reality. That much they understand. However, rather than analysing objective reality in an objective manner -- that is, scientifically, starting from the facts and data -- they have gone about it in a totally **subjective** manner. Starting from an **a priori** conclusion about this nationalism -- namely, that "Canada is an advanced capitalist country-- Canadian nationalism is reactionary", they have developed a conception of reality -- namely, that the Canadian capitalist class is a powerful independent capitalist class in domination of the key sectors of the Canadian economy, in full control of its financial institutions, firmly established in its "fortress state", and one of the major colonial imperialist powers in the world. Starting from **a priori** conceptions -- that is, in a subjective manner, they have manufactured a reality of their own. That reality -- that **conception** of reality is expounded in their document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism* upon which the political resolution rests.

But it is just this so-called reality of the Majority Tendency that has been torn to shreds by the United Tendency. And that is why, comrades, this debate hinges on your set of statistics; that is why it hinges on your analysis of the objective reality. That is why the key issue at dispute is the question of economic integration of Canada and the US, and the effects this is having on the configuration of class relations and the development of the class struggle. That is the key question -- the objective reality. And it is an accurate analysis of just this reality that is missing in the political resolution. And it is just this which allows it to virtually

ignore a key factor in the radicalization, the new expression of nationalism. In the entire section dealing with the radicalization (section D), while this radicalization is permeated with this nationalism, nothing is said about it — even in a *negative* way. Is this serious, comrades? One wonders what this whole discussion about nationalism has been all about. The Majority Tendency considers it to be such a serious matter, one which has disoriented the entire left it says, and one which threatens our very own movement; and yet, in its political resolution — in its main line resolution — it doesn't even deal with the question in any serious way.

Now, the Majority Tendency might say that the question is dealt with in *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism*. But comrades, this isn't serious. So are other questions — women's liberation, Quebec — dealt with in their respective resolutions. But that doesn't mean the political resolution doesn't go into these questions. On the contrary, the whole purpose of the political resolution is to assess the total picture and to give an overall direction to the movement on the basis of such an assessment. Nor are we dealing here merely with this or that area of the radicalization; we're dealing with the very economic and social reality in this country, which for Marxists, after all, must be the starting point of any general assessment. How can a political resolution — the main line resolution — totally ignore this reality? How can it avoid dealing in any serious way with the nationalism which it has given rise to and which is a central factor in the ongoing radicalization? How can the political resolution virtually ignore an issue which is the main question at dispute in our movement — a question which has supposedly disoriented the entire left in this country? Is this serious, comrades of the Majority Tendency? What are we to conclude? That the issue really isn't all that important? That it's secondary? That we're to just merrily go our way intervening in the radicalization — a radicalization permeated with this national sentiment — ignoring the question? Or are we just to deal with it insofar as Waffle is concerned? This isn't serious politics. And this isn't a very serious resolution as it stands.

Now, before concluding, there is something I want to stress, because there has been considerable confusion introduced into the discussion on this matter. Comrades, the United Tendency are not nationalists. We do not support nationalism, any more than we support or condemn the economic integration from which it arises. We seek to understand it as an objective fact of life, one which we are compelled to take into account. We are not for a nationalist struggle in Canada. We are not for a nationalist program for our movement. There is a profound **class**-struggle in Canada; that's the essential conflict in this country, and our program is a class struggle program for the working class. The question is: how to understand and take into account this new expression of nationalism in Canada in intervening and in putting forward our program in the growing radicalization — in the student movement, in the antiwar movement, in the feminist movement, in the working class movement itself? The difference lies in how to respond to a new phenomenon — how to articulate and shape our demands to meet it, how to effectively carry our propaganda to influence and direct it. How we will do so will depend, above all, on our analysis and our appreciation of it. With the line of the Majority Tendency, we would do battle with this new nationalist element as an element totally alien to the radicalization and something that must be rooted out. In short, we would be handling ourselves in a sectarian fashion. With the line of the United Tendency, on the other hand, we would intervene with an understanding that this nationalism is an essentially progressive element in the radicalization, one which raises the class question in this country. We would intervene by developing and applying our democratic and transitional demands to meet the needs and desires of the masses expressed in this new nationalist consciousness, and by educating the growing forces of the radicalization in the necessity of the class struggle and the international socialist revolution. In short, we would be handling ourselves in the true tradition of the transitional program and method.

The political resolution of the Majority Tendency should therefore be amended along the lines which the United Tendency has proposed. It must discuss Canadian nationalism and its place in the radicalization, not evade it, as though it were a separate question. And it must do so on

the basis of an accurate analysis of the **actual** reality in Canada today — a reality which is clearly documented in our counter-resolution to *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism*, which deals with the phenomenon of Canada-US integration.